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# Investigating Consciousness

Interview with Laurie A. Monroe, President of The Monroe Institute,  
by Cam Danielson of the Online Noetic Network

The Monroe Institute (TMI) is a non-profit organization that grew out of the work of Robert Monroe, author of *Journeys Out of the Body*, *Far Journeys*, and *Ultimate Journey*. A successful businessman, Bob Monroe created a research division of his company in 1958 to help him understand and gain control of his out-of-body experiences. Working over many years with a small set of individuals who also had similar out-of-body experiences, Bob developed the HEMI-SYNC® process of using sound waves to assist individuals in accessing states of deep meditation.

In 1977, Michael Murphy, co-founder of Esalen, asked Bob to demonstrate the results of his research to a group of participants in California. Thus began the educational program division at TMI which today offers 6 different programs. TMI also continues to build on its groundbreaking research by exploring the effects of sound waves on the brain in the research laboratory housed next to the education center at TMI headquarters in the picturesque Blue Ridge Mountains of Virginia.

Laurie Monroe became President of The Monroe Institute in 1995 with the transition of her father from the physical. In her short tenure, she has expanded the programming offered by the Institute, added to the existing facilities, and extended the reach of the Institute in creating a network of trainers or facilitators worldwide. As a graduate of several of the programs at TMI, I have come to know Laurie as a vibrant, passionate woman who, like her father, is relentless in improving the tools and techniques for creating greater access for individuals to their own spectrum of consciousness. The following interview with Laurie was done via email over a 6-week period.

**Cam:** Tell me about The Monroe Institute. How would you describe the work that is going on there?

**Laurie Monroe:** As my father once said, "The greatest illusion is that man has limitations." The Monroe Institute is a research and educational organization devoted to the exploration and investigation of human consciousness. Our approach is to speak of consciousness in terms free of dogma or any particular religion or belief system. Through the use of our patented audio guidance technology, known as HEMI-SYNC, we are able to facilitate self-directed exploration of focused states of consciousness. We use no hypnosis nor subliminal messages in our exercises. We offer 6-day residential training adventures in learning about greater aspects of self.

For example, our **Gateway Voyage** Program, which is the prerequisite program, is designed to provide tools for self-discovery, the development and exploration of consciousness, and the expansion of one's awareness. The graduate programs such as **Guidelines**, **Lifeline**, **Heartline**, **Exploration 27**, and **Beyond Exploration 27**, offer a more intensive investigation, which provides an overview of Self beyond our typical perceptions.

Our research department has continuously revalidated the effectiveness of the HEMI-SYNC sound technology through applications by members of our **Professional Division** and independent researchers from universities around the world. As we move into the 21st Century, we will turn our attention to research on specific states of experience and to explore the nature of reality beyond the often narrow confines of the physical body. As stated in our Gateway Affirmation, our work at the Institute enables the participant "to expand, to experience, to know, to understand, to control, and to use such greater energies and energy systems as may be beneficial and constructive" to them.

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**Cam:** How does the HEMI-SYNC process work?

**Laurie Monroe:** In general terms, the easiest explanation is that HEMI-SYNC signals (sound waves) create a frequency following response in the brain. The HEMI-SYNC process engenders certain brain-wave patterns that indicate the user is in different states of consciousness. For example, Focus 10 is a state of consciousness that we refer to as "mind awake, body asleep." Focus 12 is the state of expanded awareness whereby you can perceive beyond the five physical senses. Focus 15 is what we refer to as the state of "no time or space" or better yet "no time or place." Focus 21 is the state of consciousness on the boundary between our own energy system and contact with other energy systems. And beyond Focus 21 there is Focus 27 — referred to as the park — a "place" where one goes after this physical life is completed. In summary, HEMI-SYNC enables the participant to move into these states of awareness with full control as well as complete recall of the process. For a more technical definition of HEMI-SYNC, I invite you to view the research page on our website at <http://www.monroeinstitute.org>.

**Cam:** In order for ONN readers to get a better understanding of the programs offered through TMI, could you describe a typical day in the **Gateway** Program?

**Laurie Monroe:** As you know, Cam, from attending the **Gateway** Program, you are free from any time constraints during the week. You are well taken care of and the trainers let you know when it's time to eat, when it's time to listen to a tape exercise and when the scheduled activities for the day are complete.

Everyone is assigned to their own CHEC unit, which stands for Controlled Holistic Environmental Chamber. The CHEC unit serves as both an individual's private sleeping quarter and the setting for each tape exercise. The CHEC unit creates an isolated, relatively sound and light free environment to support deep states of meditation. A typical day is waking up in your CHEC unit to a delightful tape exercise that Bob created years ago called "**Cable Car**." There is an optional morning exercise session, followed by a wonderful homemade breakfast. Typically, participants will listen to three tape exercises in the morning. After each tape exercise, the group meets together in the conference room to de-brief. Many people will share their experiences, yet it is not a requirement. It is not unusual during de-briefing sessions to experience an "ah-ha" listening to someone else's experience. There is a nice break after lunch for people to spend journaling, walking around our lovely grounds in the Blue Ridge Mountains, reading, conversing with the other participants, or if it is warm, swimming in our lake. The trainers will ring a bell we have hanging outside the lodge when it's time for you to return for the afternoon session, which consists of two more tape exercises. After dinner, there is usually a presentation of some kind which is usually followed by a tape exercise. Snacks are available later in the evening for those who wish to stay up late and discuss the day's experiences.

**Cam:** In your description of the work of the institute you used the phrase "self-directed exploration of focused states of consciousness." What do you mean by that?

**Laurie Monroe:** Ah, good question. By self-directed, I mean that you are in control the whole time. As I have already indicated, there are no subliminal messages on the tapes and it is not hypnosis. It is your INTENT that enables you to explore the states of consciousness referred to as Focus levels. The tapes are merely training wheels. Once you know how to reach these states, you can easily access them by the methods you have learned. It becomes second nature the more you practice.

**Cam:** What kinds of experiences do people report having in the **Gateway** Program?

**Laurie Monroe:** People report many different experiences. Some people have spontaneous healing, some report having out-of-body experiences, some report seeing departed loved ones, but most

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find that the entire experience has changed their life significantly. For all the different experiences that people report, there is a commonality to them. I would call it an awakening to one's own ability to find out or discover what has been merely a function of belief or faith. For example, rather than believing that consciousness survives physical death, many discover evidence of this fact for themselves. They convert unknowns into knowns.

Cam:

I have heard a lot about the **Dolphin Energy Club, DEC** as you call it. Can you explain more about **DEC** and how it came about?

Laurie Monroe:

**DEC, the Dolphin Energy Club**, has been making a difference in many people's lives since 1991. It was the result of Nancy Penn Monroe's love for dolphins. While undergoing treatment for the breast cancer that finally claimed her life, Nancy's natural affinity with dolphins had unexpected benefits. Shay St. John, who is Director of Development for Unity as well as a Unity minister, was visiting with Nancy during one of her chemotherapy treatments. Shay drove Nancy to the treatment and they planned to have lunch afterwards. During the treatment, the needle was improperly placed and the chemo leaked into Nancy's hand rather than flowing into her bloodstream. The nurse informed her that her hand would definitely turn black and she would have great pain. Needless to say, Shay was furious, as was Nancy. On their way to lunch, Nancy's hand was already at least twice its normal size, getting blacker by the minute. Shay shared a story with Nancy concerning dolphins and how they assist whales during the birthing process. At that point, Nancy identified seven dolphins flowing through her bloodstream. They both told these dolphins to devour their favorite food, the chemo that was in Nancy's hand. As they focused on her hand during lunch, the swelling started to decrease and within a half hour, they could actually see the hand begin to lighten and return to its normal size. By the evening, her hand was totally normal. After an evening of brainstorming, the **Dolphin Energy Club** was born. Today, we continue to have reports of remarkable healings that are occurring at a distance. Shirley Bliley, coordinator of the **DEC** membership, handles the specific healing requests from individuals as well as the quarterly reports on **DEC** activity, dolphins, and anomalous healing research.

Cam:

I have also heard of a series that was developed for those who are in transition or for those who have a terminal illness, called **Going Home**. Can you tell us more about this series?

Laurie Monroe:

This is a wonderful series that was developed by my father, Elizabeth Kubler-Ross, and Charles Tart, Ph.D. Charles Tart has been involved with the Institute for many years and was a close friend of my father. Elizabeth Kubler-Ross, as you know, is a world famous authority on death and dying. The exercises in **Going Home** provide direct personal experience for releasing the fear of death as well as enabling one to live fully in the moment. This series helps to resolve any unfinished business and to explore one's existence beyond the physical realm. It enables people to rely on their own experience and observations to prepare them for their journey. It becomes a journey into the familiar instead of a final unknown.

People are able to complete their final journey out of their body with a positive sense of where they are headed. Death simply becomes a process along the journey and a knowing that humans simply transfer their energy into a different level of vibration — from physical to non-physical consciousness.

There are two sets of tapes, one for the person who has the terminal illness and the other for the caregivers, family and others who are supporting the process. Many people have used this series for this process and have reported wonderful experiences of the person who made the transition. It certainly helps those who are "left behind," so to speak, to know that their loved ones are "OK" and that we do survive physical death.

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- Cam:** I'm sure you are asked many times if you have talked with or seen your father. Would you like to comment on that?
- Laurie Monroe:** Yes, I do get asked that quite a bit. I can tell you that my Father was an explorer and adventurer when he was Here in this Earth Life System and he is still an explorer and adventurer in the non-physical dimension that he described as the There. From my own personal experience, the area we call Focus 27, is a vast, vast area and there is so much more even beyond the dimension of 27. To me, it is easy for him to communicate in 27. It is almost as if Focus 27 is his Focus 1 — if that makes sense. During and following his transition from the physical, communication was more frequent than it is now. He checks in occasionally but not as often. I think he has better fish to fry, as the saying goes!
- Cam:** I know you have many HEMI-SYNC tapes that are available to the public for different purposes. What tape or tapes have you used that have been effective for you physically?
- Laurie Monroe:** Ah — now that's a direct question that I have a great answer for!! I was diagnosed with asthma about six years ago. I had severe asthma attacks several times. I called my father and asked him if we had a tape that would help with my condition. I felt kind of stupid at the time because I knew about our **Lungs: Repair and Maintenance** tape. Obviously my father suggested that I use this tape. After listening to the tape a few times and using the command daily or when needed, I found that my breathing had improved. I have not had an asthma attack since and I am able to control it due to practicing the process presented on the tape. Now be advised, Cam, we do not recommend that these tapes replace any medical treatment or diagnosis. They certainly may contribute to health and wellness but they are not intended as a cure. We are very specific about this concerning all of our tapes.
- Cam:** A great deal of TMI's research agenda originated with your father's interest in learning while asleep. Would you like to comment on tapes you have available for learning?
- Laurie Monroe:** Oh yes. We have developed several tapes for learning. One very successful tape is **Remembrance**. The tape has been very effective with ADD and ADHD children (Attention Deficit Disorder and Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder). It enables them to sustain alertness, and retain information. The HEMI-SYNC frequencies in this tape differ from most of the others in that they are meant to create a focused state of awareness whereby information is more rapidly exchanged between the brain's hemispheres. We have other tapes that are also effective such as **Concentration**, **Einstein's Dream**, and the **PAL Student Package**.
- Cam:** Any other tape series that you would like to mention?
- Laurie Monroe:** For pregnancy and childbirth, we have the **Opening the Way** series, for health and well-being, we have **Positive Immunity**. For learning we have the series **On Becoming a Lifelong Learner**. Another great series that we released after the first **Heartline** program is **Opening the Heart**. And of course we have the **Gateway Experience**, which is a 36-tape or 18-CD series that was modeled after the **Gateway Voyage** Program. There is the **Surgical Support Series**, which has been used successfully by doctors and dentists with patients in hospitals and outpatient clinics.
- Cam:** Let's shift gears a little bit and talk about you. How did you get involved with the work of your father and is there a story about him that you would like to share?
- Laurie Monroe:** Being Bob's daughter, you could say I have been involved since the very beginning. His out-of-body experiences began when I was only seven. He didn't tell me about his experiences until I was ten due to the fact that he initially thought they were the beginning of the death process. I can remember how serious he was trying to describe for me what an out-of-body experience was. My response was "So?" I thought everyone flew around
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out of his or her body — it seemed very familiar to me. So I was not as concerned as he was. His dedication in his first book, *Journeys Out of the Body*, reads "To Laurie who lived through this with much unconcern." As a child, I worked with my father in his lab as one of the unofficial explorers trying out new exercises or procedures. It was also true that Bob loved to share his findings with his friends. If anyone came to our house for dinner, they were often subjected to an experience in the lab. On a more personal note, I would like to share with the readers a story about my father that captures for me the wonders of the work he began and that continues today at the Institute.

As many know from first-hand experience, it is not easy to lose a parent. That was certainly true in my case. From one perspective, it was an emotionally trying experience, but from a greater perspective, it was also a glorious experience. I will share one part of that with you. On the day he died, I had been up since 3 a.m. and by late afternoon I needed to take a nap. I laid down on the sofa in the den (a place where Bob spent a great deal of time). As I started to drift off to sleep, I felt the very familiar vibrations. They continued to increase and I felt a sense of warmth throughout my body. I instinctively relaxed and remained open to receive. As I felt the familiar sensation of being pulled out of my body, I didn't resist. I floated out and away when suddenly I saw my father with Nancy (my step-mother who preceded Bob in death by several years). Nancy looked radiant, young and full of vigor. My father smiled at me and they both hugged me. As we hugged, I felt us merge to become one entity, one life force. The next sensation I had was that I was a baby being held by my father. He gently put me down, as if he was laying me down in a crib, but he was actually returning me to my physical body. There were no words spoken — none were needed — for there was an ultimate knowing that our connection would continue forever. We do not die; we merely change from a physical state (resonating at a certain energy level) into our original state (resonating at a different energy level). As I came back to physical waking consciousness, I was very aware of what had happened — it was not a dream. The time elapsed was 22 minutes. I had tears of joy for the gift I had received. His parting gift was the energy of his love that transcends all space and time for me and which I can access at will. To this day, our communication takes place on this level — it is where all can be easily understood through simple knowing. It is where we are able to hear the unheard, for it is the connection point to all that is. It is an area that we explore in our program **Beyond Exploration 27**.

**Cam:** One final question, Laurie. What are your plans for TMI?

**Laurie Monroe:** My plans for TMI are grandiose and my vision is global, because of my experiences and the experiences of those who come here. My vision is to continue to provide a positive environment for the transformation of human consciousness, and to establish a global network so that all can experience the many benefits of the HEMI-SYNC technology. If people can turn a belief into a Known — with no lurking doubt or fear — then we have given them a gift that extends far beyond the limits of physical existence. In knowing that you are more than your physical body, you know that you survive physical death. In knowing this, you perceive this life so much differently than before. You have what we call at the Institute "a different overview."

**Cam:** Thank you Laurie for taking the time to develop this interview on-line. I know how difficult it has been given our respective schedules, but it has been a pleasure to work with you on this.

**Laurie Monroe:** Thank you for thinking of me. See you in Focus 27.

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